



# Reaching Across the Aisle



## **LIVING IN UNITY!**

### **Psalm 131**

Whether we like it or not, know it or not, believe it or not, the moment we place faith in Christ and become a Christian, we are at that same time a member of the church. We may not place our names on a membership list, we may float from church to church, event to event, or even if we absent ourselves altogether from any formal or informal connection, however, we are still members of the church. Our membership in the church is corollary of our faith in Christ. It is basic for everyone who has placed faith in Christ. It is not an option. It is part of the fabric of redemption.

## **WE ARE MEMBERS OF GOD'S HOUSEHOLD.**

*"Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow **citizens with God's people and members of God's household**, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."* Ephesians 2.19-22

Just because we are a family of faith does not mean we are one big happy family. So the question becomes not, "Am I going to be a member of the church?" but rather, "How am I going to live in this community of faith?"

## **THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY!**

*"How good and pleasant it is  
when brothers live together in unity!"* Psalm 133.1

*"**They** devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. **All the believers were together** and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*  
Acts 2.42-47

*"**And all the believers used to meet together** in Solomon's Colonnade. No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number."* Acts 5.12-14

*"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* Hebrews 10.25

*"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.'"*  
Matthew 22.34-40; Deuteronomy 6.5; Leviticus 19.8

## **THE DIFFICULTY IN COMMUNITY!**

If living in community is necessary and desirable, it is also enormously difficult. There is a clue to the nature of the difficulty in the simile *"like brothers."*

## **OIL POURED ON THE HEAD?**

There are two poetic images used that are instinct with insights in the working of encouraging and shaping a good and delightful life together in Christ.

*"It is like precious oil poured on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
running down on Aaron's beard,  
down upon the collar of his robes." Psalm 133.2*

*"Take the anointing oil and anoint him by pouring it on his head. Bring his sons and dress them in tunics and put headbands on them. Then tie sashes on Aaron and his sons. The priesthood is theirs by a lasting ordinance. In this way you shall ordain Aaron and his sons." Exodus 29.7-9*

*"Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, 'This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, **you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**'" Exodus 19.1-6*

*"But you are a chosen people, **a royal priesthood, a holy nation**, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." 1 Peter 2.9-10*

## **THE DEW OF HERMON?**

*"It is as if the dew of Hermon  
were falling on Mount Zion." Psalm 133.3a*

*"Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that **vast and dreadful desert** that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea." Deuteronomy 1.19*

*"He led you through the **vast and dreadful desert**, that **thirsty and waterless land**, with its **venomous snakes and scorpions**. He brought you water out of hard rock." Deuteronomy 8.15*

*"In a desert land he found him, in a **barren and howling waste**.  
He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye." Deuteronomy 30.10*

## **NOW AND FOREVERMORE.**

*"For there the LORD bestows his blessing,  
even life forevermore." Psalm 133.3b*